

TELIDON REPORTS

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HIGHLIGHTS

Telidon was chosen over its international competitors for major world trials in the USA and Venezuela after passing the second hurdle in the international standards race this summer.

See International Report.....Page 1

- A major Canadian manufacturer is gearing up its Telidon production lines for the business world and predicts it will be mass-producing a complete consumer Telidon TV package in 1983 to retail at \$1,000 per unit. See Mass Production.....Page 5

- A proposed code of ethics for information providers would prevent misleading advertising, medical quackery, the misuse of personal information or the transmission of "grossly offensive" material via Canadian Videotex systems. See VISPAC Annual Meeting....Page 3

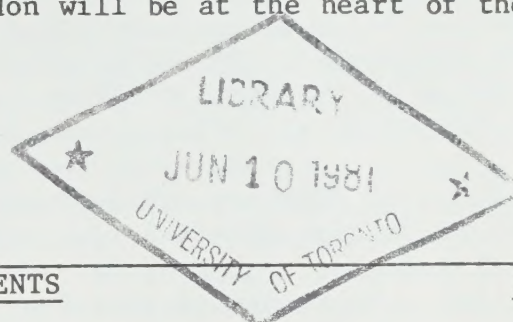
INTERNATIONAL REPORT

INTERNATIONAL SALES

Growing international interest in Telidon's technological advances over

its competition led to sales to the U.S.A. and Venezuela this summer.

Telidon will be at the heart of the



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first U.S consumer field trial of teletext information services, to start by March, 1981. Sponsored by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the U.S. National Science Foundation, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the project is being run from the PBS station WETA in Washington, D.C. The trial is being planned, organized and operated by the Alternate Media Centre of the New York University School of the Arts.

Norpak Ltd., of Pakenham, Ont., has provided 60 Telidon decoders for the trial and Electrohome of Kitchener, Ont., has provided television sets which are specially modified for the trial. Information is being provided by the Washington Post, Washington Star, the D.C. public libraries and a number of government and private information agencies. For further information contact: Red Burns, Alternate Media Centre (N.Y.U.), 725 Broadway, 4th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003, (212) 598-2852.

VENEZUELA'S OCEI

In Venezuela, Telidon will be used to display and transmit information to the public on government health, social and economic aid programs. Venezuela's Presidential Office of Statistics and Information (OCEI) signed a \$750,000 contract with Infomart, a Canadian international marketing organization. The system will operate in Caracas and use six Canadian-made Information Provider System terminals and 30 Telidon User Terminals with telephone lines as the medium of transmission.

"Infomart will provide the complete

Telidon system to OCEI and will assist and support a team of Venezuelan technicians in all aspects of the installation and start-up, including training and consulting or data-base design and page creation," said Infomart President David Carlisle. For further information contact: John McLean, Infomart, 122 St. Patrick St., Toronto, Ontario M5T 2X8, (416) 598-4000.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Telidon was recognized by international standards writers at the June 1980 meeting of the International Telegraph and Telephone Consultative Committee (CCITT) held in Montreal. While the committee did not endorse one system over another, it decided Canada's Telidon standards should have equal standing with Britain's Prestel and France's Télétel. For further information contact: Chris Schultz, Telidon, Room 2000, Journal Tower South, 300 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C8, (613) 995-4376.

EUROPEAN TRIALS

A survey of videotex developments in other countries was included in the October newsletter of the Videotex Information Providers Association of Canada (VISAPAC).

In Britain, some 6,000 Prestel sets are now in use, of which 727 are in private homes, the rest in businesses and institutions. "There is some evidence that British Telecom may back away from the mass market as its marketing objective in the short term and opt instead for business and specific segment applications," VISAPAC reports.

Holland's Viditel now has about 3,000 user terminals and 53,000 pages of information. A new computer capable of serving 6,000 users is to be installed in 1981.

In Germany, the Bildschirmtext alpha-mosaic system now service 700 users.

Finland's Telset now has 130 users, 129 of them in business, and 13,000 pages from seven primary information providers.

A Swiss pilot trial involves 140 user terminals and is expected to end in 1982.

In Sweden, the government is still studying its options, but the Swedish Union of Metalworkers has bought 20 terminals from Philips and plans its own field trial.

In Japan, the CAPTAIN trial is continuing until March 1981, with 890 terminals and 63,000 pages of information. For further information about VISAPAC, contact: Gerry Haslam, Southam Inc., 321 Bloor Street West, Suite 801, Toronto, Ontario M4W 1H3, (416) 925-2881.

TELIDON AT LIÈGE

Telidon was demonstrated at an International Conference on New Systems and Services in Telecommunications in Liège, Belgium, Nov. 24-30. Roy Marsh, manager of industrial liaison for Telidon, delivered a paper suggesting to the Belgians that Telidon is the perfect solution to their country's dilemma over which system to choose. The Flemish population have suggested the country should follow the example of Holland, which is experimenting with Brit-

ain's Prestel, while the French-speaking population is leaning towards France's Antiope system. Marsh pointed out that Telidon is adaptable to both, and could access both the Dutch and French databases.

VISAPAC ANNUAL MEETING

A draft code of ethics presented to the annual meeting of the Videotex Information Providers Association of Canada in Toronto Oct. 2 outlines responsibilities and guidelines for those who will be using Telidon and other videotex systems to distribute information to the public. Underlying the code are the principles of freedom of access and freedom of expression within the confines of Canadian laws and regulations.

The proposed code would require all information providers to clearly identify their material, to maintain a high standard of accuracy and to keep topical matter up to date.

Misleading advertising, unqualified or non-professional medical advice, and misuse of personal data would be banned under the voluntary code. All advertisements should be clearly identified as such and users should be fully informed of the financial implications of ordering a service or product via videotex.

No material that could be damaging to children would be allowed, nor any material considered "grossly offensive" to users.

The draft code has been circulated to all VISAPAC members for comment.

The VISAPAC meeting also heard re-

ports on U.S. and European videotex developments. Panel discussions were held on "questions for field trial operations," and "the economics of page creation."

An industrial strategy committee was established under the chairmanship of Neil Baird to consider approaches to the federal government regarding development of the industry.

VISPAC officers were elected for 1981: President: Gerry Haslam (Southam Inc.)
Vice-President: Peter Bowers (TV Ontario)
Treasurer: Ross Brown (Teledirect)
Secretary: Leonard Levenbrown (VISPAC)

Council members: Lewis Louthoud (Unimedia), Robert Reeves (Calladine & Baldry), Stuart Robertson (CBC), Rex Schofield (Dominion Directory). For further information on VISPAC contact: Gerry Haslam, Southam Inc., 321 Bloor Street West, Suite 801, Toronto, Ontario M4W 1H3, (416) 925-2881.

NEW EQUIPMENT

\$300 DECODER

Mass-produced Telidon decoders could be sold for less than \$300 per unit and compare favourably in price with the less-flexible British Prestel decoder, an English consultant says. Roger Woolfe of Butler, Cox and Partners, London, presented a comparative survey of the two systems to the recent conference of the International Videotex Information Providers Association in Helsinki.

Woolfe detailed present prices (without the television set) at \$1,120 for Prestel and \$1,450 for

Telidon. In quantities of 100,000 or more, Woolfe projects Prestel costs would drop to \$265 per unit while Telidon drops to \$290. For further information contact: Roger Woolfe, Butler, Cox and Partners, 26-30 Holborn Viaduct, London, England EC1A 2BP, (01) 583-9381.

ELECTRONIC PROJECTION

The flexibility of Telidon and the most up-to-date audio visual technology have been combined by Hemton Corp. of Ottawa in a multimode Electronic Projector System (EPS). Telidon images are stored locally in a portable terminal (EPS-1) and can be loaded into its local memory from audio cassettes or from a central data bank via telephone. Conventional TV monitors or TV projection units can then be used to display the pages for presentation. The EPS-2 unit takes advantage of Telidon's inherent ease of creating graphics to allow the production of custom-made pages. The portability, ease of use and rapid access to new information makes the system appealing to businessmen, educators and government officials. For further information, contact: Barbara Nelson, Hemton Corp., 1760 Courtwood Crescent, Ottawa, Ontario K2C 3L3, (613) 226-7790.

BELL-NORTHERN MARKETS VIPS

Bell-Northern Research is marketing a Videotex Information Provider System (VIPS) for "easy input, editing and formatting of large amounts of text and graphics." The system has its own micro-computer, keyboard, display unit, graphics tablet, PDI decoder and colour TV receiver, with a complete software package. For further information on VIPS, contact: Colin Boyd, Bell-Northern Research, P.O. Box 3511, Station C, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4H7, (613) 596-5986.

MASS PRODUCTION AT ELECTROHOME

Electrohome of Kitchener, Ont., is moving heavily into production of Telidon terminals for business and predicts that its mass-produced full consumer package (including conventional television reception) will cost \$1,000 per unit in 1983.

Patrick Anthony of Electrohome displayed a prototype of the Electrohome business terminal at a conference on NATAL and Telidon at the University of Waterloo Nov. 6 and 7.

The company, which already manufactures Telidon equipment, foresees production of 5,000 Telidon business packages in 1981 for sale at under \$3,000. The first package includes a 13-inch colour monitor, a Norpak Mark III decoder and modem.

For 1982, the package will be improved to include Teletext capacity. Production in 1982 could reach 25,000 units selling for about \$2,000 each.

Production in 1983 is expected to be in the 50,000 to 100,000 range, Anthony said, and Electrohome expects to offer both a refined business user package and a consumer package capable of receiving conventional television programs. With such mass production, the price would drop to the \$1,000 range, Anthony said.

In newspaper interviews earlier this year, Electrohome's Electronics Division General Manager Herbert La Pier predicted Telidon business terminal sales could soon reach \$100 million per year, which would pick up the slack on production lines caused by the stiff competition from foreign manufacturers

in the domestic appliance market.

In 1979, commercial and industrial sales accounted for about 33 per cent of Electrohome's revenue, said company chairman John Pollock. "In 1980, I would account commercial and industrial products to account for 40 - 50 per cent," Pollock said. For further information, contact: Pat Anthony, Electrohome, 809 Wellington Street North, Kitchener, Ontario N2G 4J6, (519) 744-7111.

ACROSS CANADA

STOREFRONT INFORMATION CENTRES

Supply and Services Minister Jean-Jacques Blais opened the federal government's first information service bureau in September in Edmonton. Telidon will be used in several similar information centres in other Canadian cities as well as in a pilot project to test its use in responding to inquiries by individual citizens seeking government information.

Communications Minister Francis Fox, who is responsible for implementing new federal freedom of information legislation, hailed the information centres as a major step in improving public access to government information. For a copy of the above press release contact: Pierrette Tower, Telidon Program Office, Room 2000, 300 Slater Street, Journal Tower South, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C8, (613) 996-4243.

PROJECT GRASSROOTS

The first commercial Telidon information service will open in Southern Manitoba in April, 1981. Infomart will work with the Manitoba

government to offer farmers direct access to specialized information that will help them make decisions on planting, harvesting and marketing.

Current market prices, feed costs, grain futures and other variables will be available in up-to-the-minute form at terminals in provincial agricultural representatives' offices, community centres, grain terminals and other public settings.

There are nearly 30,000 agricultural producers in the region who could become clients of Project Grassroots. The service will begin with 25 free user terminals and is expected to expand gradually. Another 150 Telidon terminals will be installed in the Elie, Manitoba, area next summer as part of a joint project sponsored by the Department of Communications and the Manitoba Telephone System. The Elie project is designed to test fibre optics in the delivery of Telidon, television, FM radio and other communications services, and Infomart spokesmen say Project Grassroots will be accessible to producers in the Elie region. For further information contact: Douglas MacCallum, Infomart, 122 St. Patrick Street, Toronto, Ontario M5T 2X8, (416) 598-4000.

CAPTIONING COMPATIBILITY

A recent appeal to the Supreme Court over the substitution of CTV's non-captioned version of Shotgun in place of a U.S. network's captioned version on Toronto cable networks has heightened public interest in the issue.

A special sub-committee of the Canadian Videotex Consultative Com-

mittee (CVCC) was formed in June to deal with the best ways to provide captioning so that Canada's 1.5 million hearing-impaired individuals could have equal access to television.

The sub-committee's first report in August proposed that no barriers be placed in the way of hearing-impaired persons who wish to take advantage of U.S.-designed closed-caption decoders now available south of the border.

The U.S. decoders, which will be available in Canada in 1981 if the federal government grants approval, sell for about \$250 and allow users to read captions included in a growing number of U.S. network programs.

While the U.S. devices represent potential competition to Telidon, both in equipment sales and in the long-term issue of TV scan-line allocation, the sub-committee felt it would be unfair to block their entry into Canada through regulatory or tariff measures.

The committee recommended that development of a Telidon captioning system should proceed with a view to compatibility with the U.S. system. Current planning proposals indicate a Telidon captioning system will not be available on the market for two or three years. Manufacturers estimate that the Canadian system would sell for about \$300 if produced in volume and \$900 before mass production begins.

The sub-committee noted that a possible option would be a stripped-down version of Telidon to serve for caption decoding only. Such a stripped-down device could be marketed within a year. The committee felt development and introduction

of such a device should be decided on by manufacturers, taking into account prevailing market forces.

The sub-committee, chaired by Keith Glegg, Vice-President (Industry) of the National Research Council, amended its recommendations in September and made special reference to the questions raised by the Shotgun dispute: "In the context of regulations relating to 'simultaneous substitution' of programs, a clarification of 'identical program' is required to make clear the effect upon 'identical' of the inclusion or absence or use of any particular Vertical Blanking Interval line or segment of line." For further information contact: Keith Glegg, National Research Council, Montreal Road, Building M-58, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0R6, (613) 993-9186.

CVCC MEETS AGAIN

The third and fourth meetings of the Canadian Videotex Consultative Committee (CVCC) were held June 13 in Ottawa and September 26 in Hull. The marketing and industrial strategy sub-committee presented a resolution calling for a Telidon equipment purchase program that would give industry the incentive for mass-scale production, thus bringing unit costs down.

"The CVCC urgently recommends to the government of Canada that it assist the establishment of a videotex industry by purchasing for delivery in fiscal year 1981/82 not less than 6,500 Telidon User Terminals and an appropriate number of IP (Information Provider) Terminals."

Some 3,000 terminals should be allocated for a government Telidon field trial across Canada in 1981 and not less than 3,500 should be allocated to the Telidon Private Sector Development Project, the resolution said.

At the September meeting it was announced that two Telidon trial liaison officers had been appointed. F. Perrier is providing support to the Bell Canada/Vista trial in Toronto, Quebec City and Montreal and R. Hutchison is looking after the Alternate-Media-Center-operated WETA trial in Washington, D.C.

The legal affairs sub-committee proposed that it prepare a report by the middle of 1981 dealing with major areas of legal concern to Telidon users, information providers and manufacturers and to make recommendations for needed changes. The sub-committee proposed that up to \$60,000 should be spent to retain expert counsel to assist in preparing such a report.

J. Syrett of the education sub-committee reported that a questionnaire has been prepared to be sent to all those who have expressed interest in the educational uses of Telidon.

The social impacts sub-committee reported progress in special projects planned for next spring and summer. A workshop for special interest groups is to be held in February and a workshop on the issue of privacy will be held in March. Committee spokesman A. Cameron also reported progress on a



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contract for designing a questionnaire on social implications for use in field trials and on two contracts dealing with access to Telidon (one on who shall have access as an information provider, one on who shall have access as a user.)

The social impacts sub-committee plans to meet again Nov. 24, 1980, probably in Montreal, to further discuss plans for public awareness activities related to the social and personal impacts of Videotex systems. Such promotions might be tied in with Videotex '81, to be held May 20-22 at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto. The CVCC has urged all supporting organizations to contribute the best possible displays to Videotex '81. For further information contact: G.

Fierheller, Chairman - Legal Sub-Committee, Premier Cablevision, Suite 200, 1090 West Georgia St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 3Z7, (604) 682-8411; P. Bowers, Chairman - Educational Sub-Committee, Ontario Educational Communications Authority, P.O. Box 200, Station Q, Toronto, Ontario M4T 2T1, (416) 484-2621; A. Cameron, Chairman - Social Impacts Sub-Committee, University of New Brunswick, P.O. Box 4400, Fredericton, New Brunswick E3B 5A3, (506) 453-4707; D. Carlisle, Co-Chairman - Marketing and Industrial Strategy Sub-Committee, Infomart, 122 St. Patrick Street, Toronto, Ontario M5T 2X8, (416) 598-4000; D. Cunningham, Co-Chairman - Marketing and Industrial Strategy Sub-Committee, Gandalf Data Communications, 9 Slack Road, Ottawa, Ontario K2G 0B7, (613) 225-0565; Dr. S. Wagner, Executive Secretary, Department of Communications, Room 1660, Journal Tower North, 300 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C8, (613) 995-6851.

VISTA MAGAZINE

The first electronic Yellow Pages are being compiled by Bell Canada as part of the joint Bell-DOC Vista project. The 481-terminal Vista trial will be run in Toronto, Quebec City and Montreal. Vista is seeking advertisers for its Users' Guide and Directory-Magazine classified section.

Vista says its quarterly publications will provide up-to-date listings of all information in the Vista database and a magazine and editorial section devoted to the videotex industry in Canada. For further information contact: Cathie McEvoy, Teledirect Publications, 10 Gateway Blvd., 6th Floor, Don Mills, Ontario M3C 3A1, (416) 429-5121.